them to the former Soviet naval base at Cam Ranh Bay in Vietnam; and

(c) if so, to what extent it has helped India in protecting the ' Indian Ocean?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Two Russian ships Admiral Vinogradov and Admiral Panteleev visited Mumbai at the invitation of the Indian Navy to participate in the International Fleet Review held at Mumbai, in February, 2001. The ships were accompanied by a tanker, Vladimir Koleshinsky. The ships departed Mumbai on 20th February, 2001.

(c) Does not arise in view of above.

Acquisition of inflight refuelling capacity for fighter bombers

5123. SHRI RUMANDLA RAMACHANDRAIAH: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Indian Air Force is set to acquire an in-flight refuelling capability for its fighter-bombers;

(b) if so, whether any concrete proposals in this regard have been worked out;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) by what time it is likely to be introduced?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES): (a) to (d) An agreement has been signed in February, 2001 with Uzbekistan for procurement of six IL-78 Flight Refuelling Aircraft (FRA). These afrcrafts would be delivered by December, 2003.

New Nomenclature of M/s. Bofors

5124. SHRI K. RAMA MOHANA RAO: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Bofors Gun Manufacturing Company of Sweden has changed its name;

(b) if SQ, what is its new name;

(c) whether the company has introduced a new version of gun;

(d) whether India has placed orders for purchase of new guns; and

(e) if so, the number of guns to be purchased?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES): (a) and (b) Bofors as a company does not exist any more to the best of our knowledge and another company called M/s. SWS Defence has taken over Bofors Company.

(c) to (e) M/s. SWS Defence have offered their Towed Gun, alongwith other vendors, for trial evaluation in India. No orders have been placed for the purchase of this gun on any company.

Compatibility of MiG's with growing needs of the IAF

5125.SHRI AIMADUDDIN AHMED KHAN (DURRU):
DR. T. SUBBARAMI REDDY:
SHRI K. NATWAR SINGH:

Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that even after the Public Accounts Committee of the Parliament finally called for phasing out of the ageing MiG-21 fighters, the Air Force Chief reaffirmed that the Air Force remain safe, secure, strong and formidable force with its MIG fleet;

(b) if so, whether the Air Force has re-examined the safety and strike force of the MiG and propose to upgrade and make the MIG fleet a technically sound and safe fighter aircraft compatible with the growing needs; and

(c) if-so, the details in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES): (a) to (c) Although MiG-21 is an aging aircraft, it remains fully airworthy consequent to regular maintenance checks and servicing procedure. Hence, MiG-21 will remain in the Air Force for some more